

A
SERMON

Preach'd to the

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SOCIETIES

FOR

Reformation of Manners,

AT

SALTERS-HALL,

June 27. 1720.

By MOSES LOWMAN.

Published at their Request.

L O N D O N:

Printed for E. M. AN. MATTHEWS at the Bible
in Pater-noster-Row. M. DCC. XX.

SEERMON

Travelling to the

SOCIETIES

FOR

Formation of Ministers

AT

SALTHERS-HALL

June 27. 1850.

By Messrs. B. W. & C.

Printed at the G. & C.

London.

Published by the Society for the Formation of Ministers, at Salters-Hall, London.



LUKE XX. 25.

And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.



THESE words of our Blessed Saviour, are one of those wise Answers he gave to the subtle and captious Questions of his Enemies; in which he shew'd that penetrating Judgment, and wary Prudence, as at once amaz'd them, and put them to silence. They were very watchful, some way or other, to ensnare him. On this occasion, they suborned Men to go to him, who should *feign themselves just Men*, Men of a very tender Regard to Conscience, and therefore seemingly desirous of a full Information in all Questions relating to it. They came, to all outward appearance, in an humble and respectful manner, but covered therewith the vilest Hypocrisy of Heart. *They asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the Person of any, but teachest the way of God truly, Ver. 21.* That is, they express'd a great Opinion of his Integrity and Impartiality, and therefore

promis'd for him, he would not fear to tell them his Judgment openly. Yet all this was with a wicked Intent, *that they might lay hold of his Words, and so deliver him to the Power and Authority of the Governour, Ver. 20.* The Question with which they propos'd to ensnare him was this, *Is it lawful for us to give Tribute unto Cesar or no? Ver. 22.* They well knew there were many among the Jews who thought themselves so peculiarly the People of God, and so immediately under his Government, that they ought not in Conscience to acknowledge the Government of another Nation, especially of a Person of another Religion; nor therefore pay Tribute to the *Roman* Emperor; which would be naturally construed an Acknowledgment of his Authority and Government: And from his Zeal for Religion and Reformation, they hoped to find him of this Party. But he perceived their Craftiness, and lets them know it, saying, *Why tempt ye me? Ver. 23.* Therefore, without directly answering the ensnaring Question, he draws them on, by Concessions out of their own Mouth, to acknowledge their present Duty, both with respect to God, and the Government God's Providence had placed over them. First, he requires them to *shew him a Penny, a small Silver Roman Coin*; then asks, *Whose Image and Superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cesar's.* He saith unto them, *Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.* This was a sufficient Intimation of his own Judgment, That Cesar, as their supreme Governor, had a right to Tribute, and that they were obliged to pay it: For it was a constructive Acknowledgment that Cesar was their supreme Governor at that time, because their Money was stamped with his Image, and bore his Superscription; for these were Marks of the Chief Magistracy, and Prerogatives peculiar

liar to it. Upon this Supposition, without setting them to perplex themselves and others with all the Niceties of *Cesar's* Title, he shews them what was their plain Duty to *Cesar*, now it was evident God had brought them under his Dominion; remembring still, that God had his Rights, as well as *Cesar*: and what they were concerned in, with respect to both, was, to give to each their respective Dues.

In speaking to these Words, I shall briefly do these following things.

I. Consider what our Saviour here supposes, That God and the Civil Magistrate have each their Rights, which we are obliged to answer.

II. Shew that we are obliged to answer them wherever they are sufficiently discover'd.

III. Accommodate these Observations to the Occasion of this Day's Assembly.

I. I am to consider what our Saviour supposes, That God and the Civil Magistrate have each their Rights, which we are obliged to answer. Our Saviour might well suppose this as a Truth. For,

In the first place, Nothing can be plainer with respect to God, and his Rights to the highest Honour and Reverence, the most ready, constant, and extensive Obedience. God is in himself a Being of infinite Perfection: It is *he who made the Heavens, the Earth, and all things that are therein.* With respect to ourselves in particular, *he is the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh, and hath formed the Spirit of Man within him.* It is *he who preserveth all things by the Word of his Power, who upholdeth our Souls in Life, who is the Author of every good and perfect Gift,*

Gift, of all the Happiness we have ever enjoy'd, and of all the Happiness we can ever expect, either in this World, or another. He is our supreme Lord and Governor, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*. In him therefore all Rights, and Titles to Obedience are united; who is our Benefactor and Patron; our Master, Father, and King; our Redeemer, and our Maker.

2. With respect to the Civil Magistrate, the high Ends of his Institution, and the many Benefits proceeding from it to publick Society, shew he must have his Rights too. For besides the natural Inclination whereby Men desire the Advantages of Social Life, there is an Order *expressly or tacitly* agreed upon, concerning the Manner of their Union in Social Life together: And thereby the Chief Magistracy is invested ever with a Power of directing the Actions of the Community, in such way as shall most tend to the publick Safety, Peace, and Happiness. This is as the Soul of the Body Politick, by which it is animated, held together, and employ'd in such Actions as the publick Good requires. So that wherever the Chief Magistracy is placed in every Community, there is a Power vested in it to direct the Actions of the several Members of it; which Directions they are under Obligations to obey. The Right of the Magistrate to Obedience in these Acts of Government, must be the same as his Right to Government itself; and Men subject to Government, are held to answer this Right upon as high Obligations at least, as they are to answer the Duties of any other Relation they stand in to each other. So that this *Civil Relation*, once establish'd, induces a *Moral Obligation*. The Rights of Princes, and the Obedience of Subjects, become Engagements of Conscience; in part, as the Duty of all Relations is bound upon Men by the Law
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of Reason and Nature, which is the Law of God; and further, as the Order, Peace, and Happiness of Society, with the Means necessary to procure and preserve them, that is, the Institution and just Rights of Governours, is the *Will* and *Intention* of God himself; who is a God of Order, and must certainly *will* the Peace and Social Welfare of Mankind. St. Paul therefore justly argues our Obedience to the higher Powers upon this Principle, *That they are ordain'd of God, Rom. xiii. 1.* And therefore every one who *resisteth the Power*, and just Rights belonging to it, *resisteth*, in so doing, *the Ordinance of God.* But this brings me,

II. To shew that we are obliged to answer these Rights wherever they are sufficiently discover'd.

It is true, these Rights which we are obliged to answer, must be sufficiently manifested. Here usually the greatest Difficulty of the Question lies. For it may sometimes happen, that the Right of requiring Obedience in some Cases may not be clear and evident; in others it may be clear and evident that a Claim of Obedience is without any Right at all. I would therefore, as far as may serve our present Purpose, endeavour briefly to settle this Point, and shew you, how the Rights both of God and *Cesar* are sufficiently manifested. And,

1. *Wherever the Will of God is sufficiently made known, there, his Right to Obedience is indisputably clear.* For every Signification of God's Will has the Force of a Law, and is to be receiv'd by all as the Command of the King of the whole Earth. So that what is manifestly discovered by the Light of Reason and the Voice of Nature, is the Will of God, the Author of Nature; and is to be receiv'd

ceiv'd as such by all his Creatures: So also is every Declaration of his reveal'd Will in his Word. In a more especial manner, when the Dictates of Reason and Law of Nature are explained and inforc'd by the positive Revelation of his Will, there is all the Evidence Men can in any way receive, that God challenges Obedience to them as his Right, which they are under the highest Obligation to answer.

2. *The Rights of the Civil Magistrate are there sufficiently manifested, when he requires what he has a Power vested in him to require, and makes known his Will in that way wherein the publick Will is to be declared.* To understand this let it be observed,

(1). What the Civil Magistrate requires *must be nothing contrary to the superior Will of God, or to that peculiar Prerogative God has reserved to himself over the Consciences of Men.* Such is the supreme Authority of God that no other can be equal, much less superior, to it. And if it shall ever happen that God and Man cannot be obey'd at the same time, the Case is very clear that we are to obey God rather than Man: And Conscience, as it is the inward Persuasion of a Man's own Mind, can only be subject to the Authority of such Declarations, as have, at the same time, the Evidence of certain Truth to persuade, and a competent Power to command. Hence it was a wise Observation of a celebrated Casuist * "That human
" Laws meddle not with the Understanding,
" that is to be governed as it can be persuaded,
" and is therefore subject to the Empire of none
" but God."

(2.) *The Will of the Magistrate must also be signified according to the Constitution of the Government in that*

* Taylor, Ductor Dubitant. lib. 3. c. 1. §. 35.

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Way and Form of declaring the publick Will which is received and established in the Community. The Foundation and Reason of this is well express'd by the Judicious Mr. *Hooker*, in whose Words I shall therefore represent it to you. † " At the first, when some
" certain Kind of Regiment was once approved,
" it may be that nothing was then further thought
" upon for the Manner of Governing, but all permitted
" unto their Wisdom and Discretion,
" which were to rule ; till by Experience they
" found this for all Parts very inconvenient, so
" as the thing which they had devis'd for a Remedy,
" did indeed but increase the Sore which it
" should have cur'd. They saw that to live by
" one Man's Will, became the Cause of all Mens
" Misery. This constrain'd them to come unto
" Laws, where Men might see their Duty beforehand,
" and know the Penalties of transgressing them." Upon this Foot, in most Cases what are declared the Rights of Government by the publick Voice of the Law, are only to be understood as sufficiently manifested : I say, *in most Cases* ; for it should be here observed, there are some Duties so plainly evident, from the very Nature of Society, that the manifest Reason of the thing carries an Obligation with it. And upon this account it may be thought superfluous for the Laws to declare any thing expressly concerning them : Such as the general Care every good Man should have for the Safety and Prosperity of the Commonwealth ; that he should be ready with his Estate, Fortune, and Life, for its Preservation ; and use all his Skill and Industry to promote and advance its Interests ; which a great

† *Eccl. Pol. l. 1. §. 10.*

Author makes the first Principal of political Duties. *

(3.) *The Rights of the Civil Magistrate are then without all question sufficiently manifest, when what he requires, tends to promote the very End and Design of his Institution, and is regularly declared by the publick Voice of the Law.* In such Case no Objection can remain. If he has a Right to rule at all, to be obeyed in any thing, it must be sure in such things which are the proper Business and Intention of his Office, and where none can pretend Ignorance of his Will, or of his Authority to command. When God has made him his Minister for Good, and to execute Wrath upon him that doth Evil; sure he has a right to punish such Evil-doers, to restrain those Evils he was ordained to prevent, and to be obeyed, when he declares it to be his Will to do so. This must be the unquestioned Right of the Magistrate, and when thus signified must lay an Obligation in Duty and Conscience to answer it. But I proceed now to the

III. Third Thing proposed, to accommodate these Observations to the Occasion of this Day's Assembly: and from hence I think it may fully appear,

1. That the Cause of Reformation, in which you are engaged, is a Cause wherein the Rights of God and Cesar are concerned.

2. That the Manner, in which you are engaged in this Cause, is sufficiently manifested to be the Will both of God, and the Civil Magistrate. And,

* *Erga totam Civitatem Officium boni Civis est, ut ejus salute et incolumitate nihil habeat carius; ut vitam, opes fortunaeque suas ad eandem servandam libenter offerat; ut ad eandem illustrandam, ejusque commoda promovenda, omnes ingenii et industriae nervos intendat. Puffendorf De Officio Civis, l. 2. c. 18.*

3. That

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3. That you are under Obligations of Duty and Conscience to answer both ; and the rather so, because in this the Rights, both of God and the Government, are united.

1. *The Cause of Reformation in which you are engaged, is a Cause wherein the Rights of God and Cesar are concerned.* It is the vertuous Design of your Societies, to put some stop to the bold and insolent Immorality and Profaneness of the Age wherein we live ; to prevent the Sin and mischievous Consequences of Drunkenness, Blasphemy, profane Swearing, and Cursing, Profanation of the Lord's Day, and such dissolute, immoral, and disorderly Practices. These are great Disorders with respect to God's moral Government of the World, highly tending to the Dishonour of his Name, and reflecting upon his Authority. These are Sins against the plainest Light of Nature, as well as the most expresse Declarations of God's revealed Will : So that God has every way shewn his Displeasure, and revealed his Wrath too against such unrighteous Deeds. *As for these things, Men are without any Shew or Pretence of Excuse, the Children of Disobedience ; so because of these things cometh the Wrath of God upon them.* Eph. 5. 6. It is most certainly *the Will of God* that Men should deny such Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, without which it is impossible they should live either soberly, or righteously, or godly. Now if such is *the Will of God*, is it not *his Right* to be obeyed therein ? And are not all who own *this Right of God*, concerned to acknowledge it, by doing what in them lies to prevent such Dishonour to his Name ? Are they constantly to pray that the Name of God may be hallowed, that his Kingdom may come, and his Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven ; and shall they be unconcerned at such profane Swearing, and such horrid Curses, as vilify the Majesty of God, profane the Blood of the

Covenant, and make even a Jest of the Damnation of Hell? Hath an unclean Person no Inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God; and can they be unconcerned to see such a Vice grow common, and impudent, as it is like to do, without Controul? Sure if they account themselves engaged in any thing to stand up for God, it may be well expected they should stand up for God against such Sins, so dishonourable to him, such effectual Bars to all the Intentions of his Grace, and such open Transgressions of the Laws of his Government. Can we forget these things whenever we consider what we are to render to God?

And it is sure *the Right of the Government* to prevent these Enormities, and one manifest End and intended Benefit of Government itself to do so. It was observed by our late King of glorious Memory, * **Nothing can prove a greater Dishonour to a well-ordered Government where the Christian Faith is professed, nor is likely to provoke God to withdraw his Mercy and Blessings from us, and instead thereof to inflict heavy and severe Judgments upon this Kingdom than the open and avowed practice of Vice, Immorality, and Profaneness.** It cannot indeed be long before a Government must feel the Effects of a general uncontrouled Corruption of Manners. When Drunkenness, Uncleaness, and profane Swearing have effectually debauched Mens Minds and ruined their Fortunes, both the usual Consequences of such disorderly Practices, what may not be feared from them; not only in the spreading Contagion of such bad Examples, to the ruin of many others in their Estates and Credit,

* K. William's Proclamation for preventing and punishing Immorality and Profaneness.

their Bodies, and their Souls, but farther in all the Disorders of Robberies, Riots, and Rebellions? When profane Swearing shall have destroyed all Reverence for an Oath, what way may it make to Perjuries of the most dangerous Consequence, as to the Lives and Fortunes of private Men, so to the Quiet if not to the Hazard of the Crown itself? Sure then, the Government has a Right to interpose, to prevent or punish Practices of such Importance to its own Peace and Happiness, to its Honour and Safety. In this particular Case, the Government has interposed, and asserted this Right: It has declared it in many and repeated Acts of the whole Legislature. If then we are to render unto *Cesar* the things that be *Cesar's*, herein *his Right* is full, and *fully manifested*, to put a Stop to these Vices, a Restraint to these dangerous Evils.

2. *The Manner in which you are engaged in this Cause, is sufficiently manifested also to be the Will both of God and the Civil Magistrate.* As you are engaged in this vertuous Design, where you have the Cause of God and your Country in view; so you have wisely chosen a Way, in which it is the *Will of both* you should pursue it. The Way you have chosen, is by united Counsel, and mutual Assistance, to take care that the wholesome Laws of your Country, on this behalf provided, may be put in due execution. That Laws should be executed, is as necessary as that they should be made. It does not answer our Duty either to God, or our Country, that we personally our selves obey what they require, if we do not all that we wisely and prudently may, to prevent and give a Check to the Disobedience of others. It is a commendable Character of *a righteous Soul*, to be grieved in seeing and hearing from day to day
such

such unlawful Deeds. 2 Pet. ii. 8. It is an Act of Love to God, and Charity to our Neighbour, in such Cases, to admonish and reprove them. It is then the *Will* of God: *Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart: Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him,* Levit. xix. 17. It is indeed the Admonition of the Wise Man, *He that reproveth a Scorners, getteth to himself Shame,* Prov. ix. 7. Such as deride Religion, and scoff at all good Admonitions, are lost to all the gentler Methods of Reproof, and it is in vain to try them. But will a Zeal for the Honour of God and the Interests of his Kingdom in the World, find out no other Methods where these fail, against outrageous Wickedness, and so put some Stop to its spreading? The same Wise Man has directed to another Method: *Judgments are prepared for Scorners, and Stripes for the Back of Fools,* Prov. xix. 29. In Cases where these Methods only can have effect and be of service, are they not as plainly within the Equity of the Rule, and the Intention of God, as the gentler Methods of Admonition and Reproof, where they are likely to prevail? Is it not then *the Will of God* that we should endeavour, as far as we prudently may, in *this Way*, to correct those Evils which other Remedies will not reach, and which yet the Honour of God, and the Cause of Religion, are so highly concern'd to have prevented.

As to the Civil Magistrate, how much it is his Will, appears, in that the Laws themselves have directed, and set out the Way in which you have chosen to proceed.

It is an undoubted Presumption, when Laws were made, they were intended to be executed: And it cannot be a severer Reflection on a Government,

vernment, than to say of it, It has the best Laws the worst executed of any Nation in the World. This must shew the last Degeneracy, when things are come to that pass which the Roman Historian complain'd of, That they can neither bear their Vices, nor endure a Remedy for them *. But it does further appear, that these Laws in particular, the Execution of which it is your Design to promote, were intended to be put in full execution; and that the proper Assistance of all Persons therein, is both requir'd and expected.

Since there is such Encouragement given for Informations, such Penalties on them who shall omit their Duty in the Execution of them, and such Protection given to all Persons 6 & 7 Gul. 3. in doing, or causing to be done, any thing in pursuance of them: It has therefore been thought necessary to enforce the Execution of them by several Proclamations; in the last of which our present King thus expresses himself:

We do strictly charge and command all our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other our Officers and Ministers Ecclesiastical and Civil; (after all which follows) and other our Subjects whom it may concern, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery, and the effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty, &c.

* Labente deinde paulatim Disciplina, velut desidentes primos sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint tum ire caperint precipites, donec ad hæc Tempora, quibus nec vitia nostra nec remedia pati possumus, perventum est. Livius in Prasat.

This Proclamation, for its Importance, order'd to be read at the respective Assizes and Quarter-Sessions, and four times a Year in every Church and Chappel, is a direct Description of the Method you take to serve your Country, of the Way wherein you have chosen to carry on so good a Design.

3. I come now to consider, That you are under Obligations to answer these Rights of God and *Cesar*; and the rather so, because here the Rights of both are united.

Each of these Rights have their separate Obligation: Not to give to *Cesar* the things that be *Cesar's*, is Disloyalty, and an higher Injustice than not to answer the private Rights of any particular Person, † inasmuch as it is Injustice to the whole Community, and to every particular Person in it: For every Right which every Man has, and all the Happiness of Social Life, depends upon the Protection of the Government, and orderly Execution of the Laws: It is contrary to that Faith and Allegiance we owe to our Prince, and to which we are bound by solemn Oath; for that certainly respects the Rights of his Government, as well as of his Person.

And not to give to *God* the things that be *God's*, is Impiety and Irreligion, an Act of yet higher Injustice, as the Right of God to all Obedience from us is founded in our very Beings, is extensive as all the Blessings we can hope for

† Illa autem sapientia quam principem dixi, rerum est divinarum atq; humanarum Scientia, in qua continetur, Deorum & Hominum Communitas, & Societas inter ipsos. Ea si maxima est, ut certe, necesse est quod a Communitate ducatur Officium, id esse maximum. *Cicero de Offic. l. I. §. 43.*

as Men, or expect as Christians, and is derived from a Concurrence of every Title. How great must the Obligation then be, when both these Rights are united; when the Laws of God and our Country call for the same Acts of Obedience from us; and that too, in what so nearly concerns the Moral Government of God in the World, the Interests of the Kingdom of Grace, and the common Peace and Prosperity of the whole Nation? Here is no room to cool our Zeal with *Gamaliel's* Observation, *Refrain from these Men, and let them alone, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God*, Acts v. 38, 39. It may discourage an active Prosecution of human Laws, when Men can find no Occasion against those they punish, concerning the Kingdom, and would never find any, except they found it against them concerning the Law of their God, Dan. vi. 4, 5. as was the case of *Daniel*. In such Case, to be an Informer, or active Prosecutor, may expose Men both to *Reproach* and *Danger*. But here, you are assur'd, the Evils you endeavour to restrain, are as injurious to God, and as displeasing to him, as they are destructive of Peace, Order, and all good Government among Men. Here is not the least occasion to doubt the *Justice* of your Cause, or the *Prudence* of that Method in which you manage it: All Considerations concur to animate your Zeal. Go on to shew the Regard you have to the great Apostolical Precepts, how truly you fear God, how much you honour the King.

Now, upon the whole of this Argument, it may appear, I hope,

In the first place, *That your Societies are abundantly vindicated in what they have generously undertaken*

dertaken for the Honour of God, and Good of Mankind.

Sorry I am there should be any occasion to speak in your *Vindication*: But as Honourable as your Cause is, as much as all Men, who are not by their Vices Enemies to the Reformation you promote, are obliged to encourage and assist you; I yet fear you meet with some *Discouragement*, not to say *Reproach*, where, in all reason, it should not be expected. What may be the true Reasons, I shall not enquire; it is sufficient, they cannot be good Ones. It is your Design to promote Religion and Vertue, to prevent the open Progress of the most mischievous Vices. So far, I hope, is well enough. This you endeavour in the Way the Laws themselves have prescrib'd, and the Wisdom of the Legislature has found out for it. In that too I hope there is no Harm. What then is the Matter? You meddle, it seems, without Authority and Commission. Strange! that a particular Commission should be necessary for Christians and Subjects to fear God and honour the King; to wish well to the Interests of Religion, and the Peace of Mankind, and to use their best Endeavours to promote them. It is necessary indeed some Persons be especially appointed, whose Business it should be to attend this Work. The Ministers of God have it therefore in Charge to warn Men of these Sins, to exhort and rebuke with all Authority. The inferiour Magistrates have a special Trust repos'd in them, with all Faithfulness, Impartiality, and Diligence, to see these Laws executed. But these are peculiar Obligations superadded to the general Obligations of Men and Christians. They have the Dishonour of their Character, the Breach of their Trust, and

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and all the Mischiefs the neglect of their Duty may occasion, to answer for, *over and above* the Breach of that general Duty all owe to God and the King.

Yet sure these Rights of God and *Cesar* are not restrain'd to Ministers and Magistrates. It is manifestly the Will of both, that *all Men* should, as far as they reasonably may, promote their plain and just Rights, and therefore put some Stop to those Vices, they both require should be restrain'd.

I am asham'd to mention, as an Objection, *That you offer your selves willingly to this Service.* Sure Men must be very hard put to it, to find out Objections, when it shall be suppos'd a Fault in Men, that they are *willing* to do Good. If your Conduct is reproached with *false Accusations*, and such, as far as I could ever find, are what your Enemies lay to your Charge; so may the best Designs in the world be used, so they too often have been. In such Case, Innocence is a full Vindication, and common Justice requires no Man should receive or spread an evil Report of another, till it shall be prov'd; that he should reject, with a vertuous Resentment, every such Report that has been disprov'd. Indeed, no Men, much less numbers of Men, are free from all *Mistakes*, or therefore from all Acts of Imprudence: All that Men can do, and with which therefore, sure, every one should be satisfy'd, is, to use such regular and prudent Care as you have prescrib'd to your selves; to act by calm and deliberate Counsel; to discountenance all Rashness, and effectually remedy every Mistake that comes to your knowledge.

What can further remain for your full Vindication, but what is in your own hands to do; to

shew, by the exact Regularity of your own *Manners*, your Zeal for the *Reformation of others*, is sincere and upright? By a constant exercise of those Vertues your selves, which you endeavour to promote in others; by an especial Care of Vertue and Religion in your own Families, you must finally put your Enemies to silence. It will then manifestly appear to all unprejudic'd Persons, your Zeal in this Cause is the effect of the best Principles, religious Fear of God, and a generous Love to Mankind.

2. *As you are hereby vindicated, you are also encouraged and exhorted to proceed.* To stand firmly to the Cause of God, and the Interests of your Country; this is sure a Cause too glorious to be forsaken: And what Discouragements, what Difficulties soever you meet with, cannot be such, as will warrant you at once to give up the Rights of God and *Cesar*. Think with yourselves, if the Difficulties are too great that lie in the Way to an End so necessary, notwithstanding your mutual Counsel and Help; the Time you give to it from your own Affairs, and the great Charge you generously support, to defeat the common Arts of obstinate Wickedness, in perverting Judgment, and to render all Laws ineffectual; what must be the fatal Consequence if you should lay aside your Care! Think with yourselves, if things are now so bad with us, how much worse they must be, when there is no Check, no Controul; when you shall yield the Victory to Vice, when it shall have born down all Opposition, and none are left to stand against it. Good Minds will be affected sure with such a miserable State of their Country. But you should also consider how near this may bring the Danger to your own *Families*, and the Persons for whose
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Preservation you are most affectionately concerned. The best hope you have for the Preservation of such as are yet *Innocent*, is from the vigorous prosecution of your Design to lessen the numerous Temptations that will otherwise lie in their Way. Consider you have the Laws of your Country on your Side, you are engaged in the Cause of God, and have all Reason to expect his Blessing and powerful Assistance. The Event indeed is in his hands: But the Conscience of performing your Duty to him, which way soever the Event shall be, and of aiming sincerely at his Glory and the general Good of Mankind, will at present afford you the highest and noblest Pleasure; and assure you, however you miss your reward from Men, you shall receive a full and ample Reward at the Hands of God.

3. To conclude; These Considerations should shew all Persons who wish well to your Cause, how much they are concerned to encourage and assist you to the utmost of their Power. I hope all such Persons will think they are under some Obligation to answer the united Rights of God and *Cesar*, and where they are so fully manifested that no room is left to doubt of them. I do not say, that every one is under an Obligation to promote this Cause in one and the same way. A great deal is certainly left to our own Prudence, as to the manner of it: but I hope I may now be allow'd to say, That every one is under an Obligation to promote this Cause in some way or other, and that in Prudence they should do so in such way as is most likely to succeed. The Method you have engaged in has the Advantage of mature Deliberation to form it, and of Experience to ripen and perfect it. It is easy to see no private Attempts of Reformation can be
so

so extensive, or so effectually executed, as where Mens Counsels and Actions are united in Society : Where Men then have either the Cause of God, or the Prosperity of their Country at heart, are they not directed to wish well to your Undertaking, as they desire the Success of your Cause ? If they sincerely do so, can less be expected of them, than their good Word, their Prayers to recommend your Cause to the Blessing of God, and to justify your Conduct against the unreasonable Reproaches of Men ? And if this be reasonable, sure something more may be reasonable too ; that they who can benefit you by their Counsel, or assist you by their Presence, should do so ; that they who cannot with Convenience to their private Affairs afford their Time, should yet assist in supporting your Charge, which is too great to remain always a Burden upon a few. May God awaken a more general Concern for his own Interest, and send down more universally into Mens Hearts a publick Spirit, and unfeigned Zeal for the publick Good. May He so bless your Endeavours, and He can do it, that we may all rejoyce in the Success of them. May we live to see the happy Times, when Judgment shall so dwell in these Lands, and Righteousness remain among us ; that the Word of Righteousness may be Peace, and the Effect of Righteousness Quietness and Assurance for ever, Isa. xxxii. 16, 17. which God of his infinite Mercy grant.

FINIS.